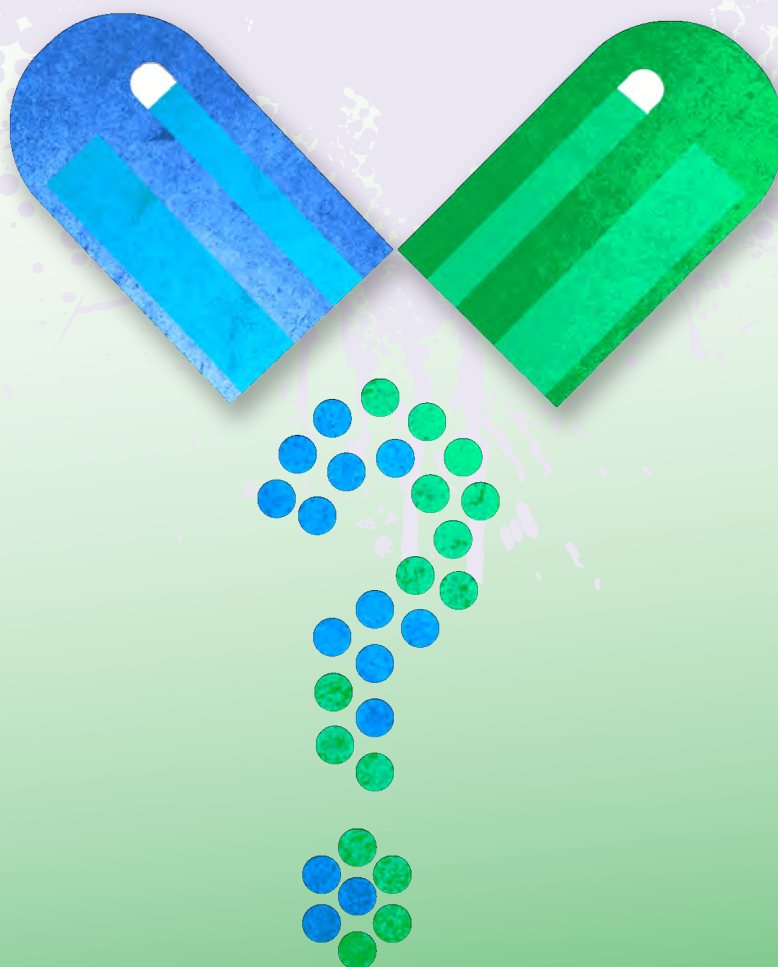


HOMework GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS AND MENTORS

FOR EDUCATORS AND MENTORS: PUTTING KNOWLEDGE TO THE TEST



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

NIDA NATIONAL INSTITUTE
ON DRUG ABUSE

PEER_x: _{Rx} ABUSE IS DRUG ABUSE

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June 2010

Classrooms provide a great opportunity to reach teens with prevention messages because, as teachers and mentors, you have their attention for months and years at a time. We hope these ideas and the information on the PEERx Web site will help you incorporate facts about the science behind prescription drug abuse into your lesson plans.

IDEA 1:



Science or Health Teachers

Educate your students on the science behind prescription medications—what they are, how they affect the body and brain, and what the dangers are when they are abused. Use information from **The Facts** section of the PEERx Web site to develop questions as part of a homework assignment. Then, refer students back to the PEERx Web site to find the answers. Or, download and print out the **Prescription Drug Abuse Fortune Teller** as an interactive way to demonstrate the possible side effects of abusing prescription drugs. Let them explore other features, such as **Cool Stuff** and **Blog/Comment**.



IDEA 2:



Art Teachers



Have your students research the effects of different types of prescription medications. A good starting point is **The Facts** section of the PEERx Web site. Then, have the students create paintings, drawings, or sculptures based on what they discover. For instance, opioids attach to specific proteins called opioid receptors, which are found in the brain, spinal cord, gastrointestinal tract, and other organs. When opioid drugs attach to these receptors in certain brain regions, they can actually change the way a person experiences pain. Have your students creatively, realistically, or abstractly depict how these proteins work. Or they can check out the **Cool Stuff** download images at PEERx for inspiration to design clever messages about the dangers of prescription drug abuse. With each painting, drawing, or sculpture, ask your students to write a brief summary about what their artwork depicts.

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IDEA 3:



English and Journalism Teachers

Use the information provided on the PEERx Web site to guide your students in writing a short story, script, or news story that involves prescription drug abuse. In an effort to create an open and safe dialogue among your students, ask them to incorporate the reasons why some teens abuse prescription drugs and the effects that these drugs have on the body.



IDEA 4:



Physical Education Teachers



Give your students a homework assignment to research the physiological effects of prescription drug abuse on the brain by referring them to the PEERx Web site. For example, ask them to identify how opioids, depressants, and stimulants affect the brain and what the harmful effects of abuse are.

In the meantime, create a ropes course. Divide the class into teams. Give each team a pad of paper and pencil to take with them. At each station, have a question about prescription medications. Possible questions could include: What are the most commonly abused prescription medications among teens? What are opioids?

Before participating in the station's activity, students must write the answer to the question on their pads of paper. At the end of the activity, collect the papers. Review the questions and answers with the class. The team with the most correct answers receives a reward.

In addition, at the end of the activity, ask the students how their ability to perform the physical activities would have been affected if they were abusing prescription drugs.

To create the questions for this activity, visit **The Facts** at PEERx.

Learn more about prescription drug abuse and the harmful effects it can have on the body. Get involved and tell others about what you learn. Spread the word to prevent prescription drug abuse. Go online to check out PEERx at <http://teens.drugabuse.gov/peerx>.

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